ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.
ED002444	N.A.	N.A.

4. AUTHOR(S): N.A.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: The Disadvantaged Child: A Program for Action

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN: New Jersey Education Association

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: New Jersey Educational Association, 180 West State Street Trenton, New Jersey

ORG. 180 West State Street
ST. Trenton,
CITY, STATE New Jersey
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	4/64	40

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: Program Description

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

teacher qualifications, elementary education, special education, compensatory education, teacher recruitment, secondary education, team teaching, professional education, disadvantaged youth, vocational education, teacher education, community factors, work-study programs, graduate education, enrichment, public schools

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

A large number of New Jersey public school pupils are affected by environmental factors which limit their aspirations and their achievements in the process of education. Three factors affecting the disadvantaged child are that his family is economically poor, his home life provides little if any stimulation to his intellectual growth, and he and his family suffer from racial, ethnic, or other forms of social discrimination.

Recommendations for the education of disadvantaged children include: school systems with many disadvantaged children should have special teachers and teams; class size in these schools should be under 20 pupils; efforts should be made to eliminate de facto school segregation; preschool enrichment, vocational orientation, and guidance programs should be developed; high school work-study programs should be developed; special materials and textbooks appropriate for disadvantaged children should be developed; and schools should be cautious in using standardized tests with disadvantaged children.

Recommendations for the recruitment and preparation of teachers for the disadvantaged are that: the teaching profession should make efforts to change the attitudes of its own members and the public so that the best teachers are encouraged and enabled to teach in schools which have a concentration of disadvantaged children; that teachers' colleges should develop special programs for the identification and training of teachers to work with the disadvantaged, including an off-campus laboratory school in an area having a concentration of disadvantaged children; and that new teachers prepared to teach disadvantaged children should be assigned to schools in teams.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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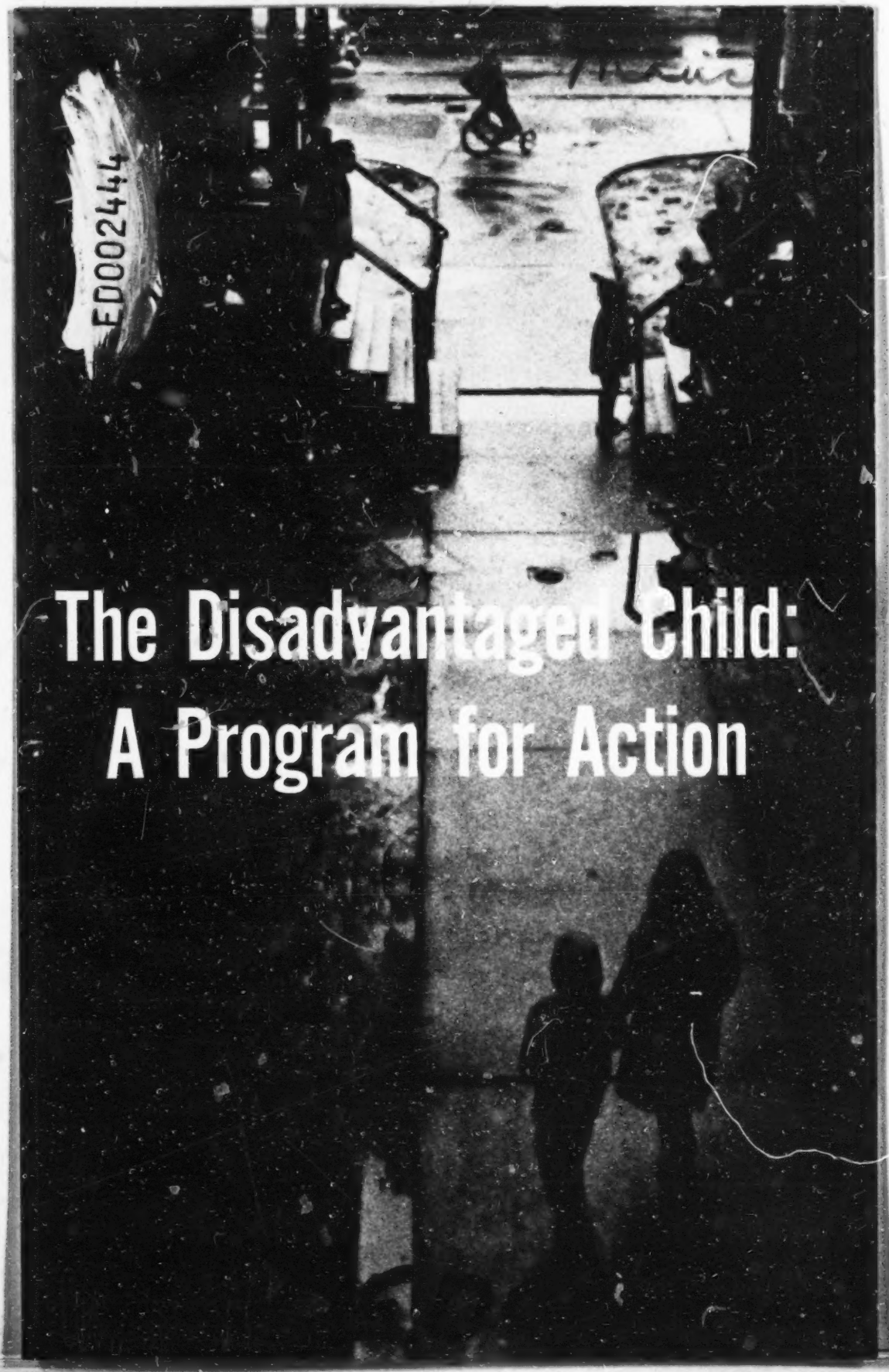
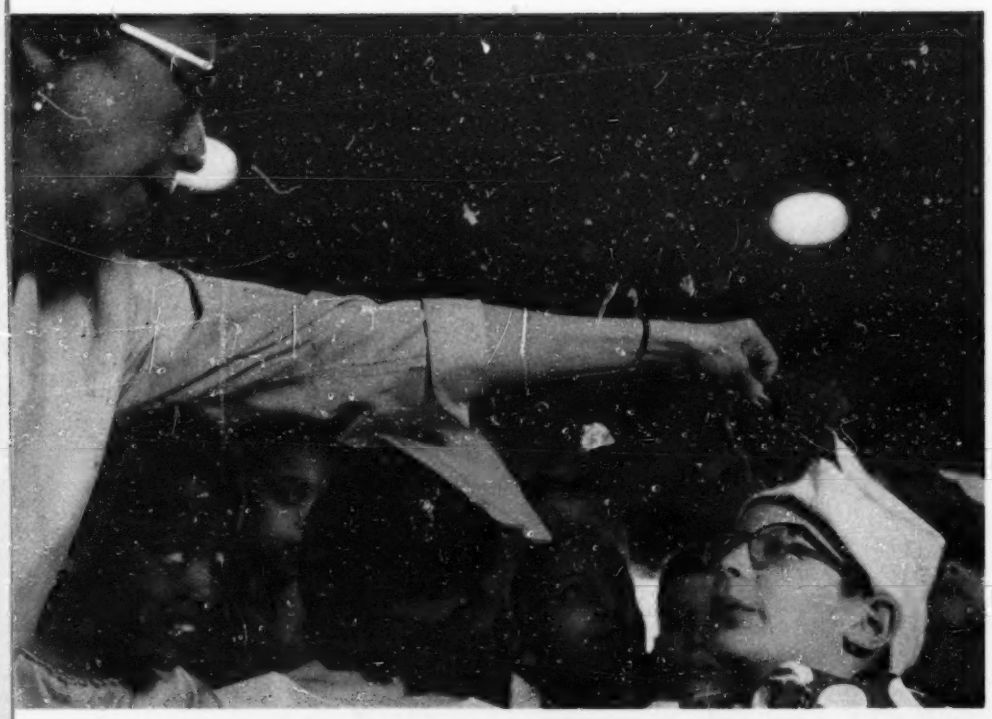


The Disadvantaged Child: A Program for Action

—scene from NEA film "Children Without"



. . . they need a quality education which is flexible enough to encompass their special problems and help them move as rapidly as possible into the normal processes of education.

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NJEA has adopted specific recommendations as part of its action program for improving the education of disadvantaged children in New Jersey. Special emphasis has been given to the recruitment and preparation of teachers for schools in areas with a high percentage of disadvantaged youngsters.

The NJEA Special Committee on the Disadvantaged, created to study the problem of educating the disadvantaged, framed the recommendations. On November 12, 1964, the NJEA Delegate Assembly approved them, giving general direction to Association policy for meeting the problems of disadvantaged children and teacher recruitment and preparation.

The NJEA Special Committee on the Disadvantaged, will meet with other NJEA committees, representatives of colleges, educational groups, and agencies, as well as non-educational organizations and agencies, to encourage implementation of these recommendations.

The Committee will act as an information clearing house on available federal, state, and foundation financial assistance and will continue to study additional implications which the problems of teaching the disadvantaged present in New Jersey.

The Disadvantaged Child:

A Program for Action

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
180 West State Street • Trenton, N. J. 08608 • Tel: (609) 599-4561

Assumptions about the disadvantaged

♦ A sizable number of New Jersey public school pupils are affected by environmental factors which limit their aspirations and their achievements in the process of education.

These children may be called "disadvantaged." Their failing is not caused by lack of mental or physical ability. They are the innocent victims of social misfortune.

♦ Three major factors affect the "disadvantaged" child.

His family is **economically poor.** His home life provides **little if any stimulation to his intellectual growth.** He and his family may suffer from racial, ethnic, or other forms of social **discrimination.** Any one of these factors may be sufficient to inhibit the "disadvantaged" child's ambitions and performance in school. When all three are combined, the effects on the child can be unusually frustrating and discouraging.

♦ The "disadvantaged" child is not mentally retarded.

However, because he has not come to learn as well in school as children from other environments, he may appear below average in ability and have been taught by methods appropriate to slow learners and the mentally retarded. Through misunderstanding of the environmental factors which affect these otherwise "normal" children, schools may unwittingly contribute to the lack of aspiration and ability of the "disadvantaged" child. Through better understanding of these

factors and through special attention on the part of the schools and teachers to compensate for them, "disadvantaged" youngsters can find success in regular school programs.

♦ However, environmental factors should not be an excuse for failing to examine other elements that may contribute to academic weakness.

There are many reasons why children do not succeed in school. The environmental factors affecting the "disadvantaged" child may be only one of them.

♦ The economic and social needs of modern society demand that the number of persons with low educational attainment be reduced to as low a level as possible.

Persons with low educational aspirations and achievement are limited in their ability to adapt to changing requirements for employment. In a technological economy, their contribution—both in terms of productivity and in terms of consumption—is limited. With increasing automation, the possible uses for their unskilled manpower are diminishing. When they work, they can find few jobs and command low pay. Often they cannot avoid unemployment and must depend on tax-supported public welfare for their subsistence. Frequently, they are rejected for military service. They are deprived of many opportunities for personal development and participation in community affairs. Left on their own, their children are likely to follow a similar pattern and repeat the cycle through succeeding generations.

♦ The problem of the "disadvantaged" child is not only a problem of race, although racial factors do have a considerable effect.

In the 1960 Census, there were 113,000 white New Jersey children in families having an annual income under $3,000; and there were 53,000 non-white New Jersey children in families having an income under $3,000. Using this measure, it is apparent that two out of three economically disadvantaged children in New Jersey are white. However, the proportion of non-white children among the economically disadvantaged is far above the regular white-non-white ratio in the total population. Among 882,332 white New Jersey families who had children under 18, 55,000—or 6.7%—had annual incomes under $3,000, while among the 65,533 non-white New Jersey families who had children under 18, some 21,000—or 32.0%—had annual incomes under $3,000. A majority of non-white children may not be "disadvantaged" but it is obvious that the proportion who are is too large.

♦ Social problems intensify as "disadvantaged" families accumulate.

The problem of the "disadvantaged" child is intensified in older, densely populated urban centers and certain rural areas where economic and social conditions have forced the "disadvantaged" to collect in areas which the remainder of the population does not otherwise choose to inhabit. The "disadvantaged" remain marooned and unassimilated. The larger the concentration, the more powerful the forces keeping children from changing negative neighborhood attitudes toward education and society.

• The "disadvantaged" exhibit certain common characteristics which stem from their pattern of living.

The "disadvantaged" home provides little informal education in the pre-school years of the kind that will prepare the child for successful learning when he enters school. Thus, "disadvantaged" children generally lack verbal skills. They speak in patterns that are often alien outside their neighborhoods. Their home life does not put value on reading and does not prepare them for learning. These children do not understand the need for reading and they lack the visual discrimination which enables them to begin reading easily. Consequently, many do not readily learn to read or write well.

"Disadvantaged" children generally are not able to concentrate well and they can listen only for short periods. Left to their own devices, these children are apt to develop improper learning habits. Their vocational and personal goals are vague and uncertain, giving them little incentive to master traditional academic tasks or skills basic to future success in an advanced technological society.

Some common problems in areas with a concentration of the "disadvantaged" include disorganization of the family, absence of traditional patterns, and a wide variety of cultural attitudes and backgrounds. "Disadvantaged" children are apt to view all authority—including the school staff—with suspicion and sometimes outward hostility. The general conditions of life in the "disadvantaged" home discourage the development of individual dignity, commonly accepted values, and social habits which help others to be accepted and succeed in American society.

General recommendations on the education of disadvantaged children

♦ Each school in New Jersey must be dedicated to handling the individual needs of each child enrolled.

A high degree of flexibility and an abundance of resources must be available in every school. Teachers must be able to employ a wide variety of methods so that in some way every child may be brought into the process of education. Curriculums must be sufficiently extensive and variable so that subjects to be covered can be approached according to the particular previous experience and level of readiness of each individual. "Disadvantaged" children should not be separated from the very mainstream of society into which they should be assimilated. The "disadvantaged" do not need a special education as much as they need a quality education which is flexible enough to encompass their special problems and help them move as rapidly as possible into the normal processes of education.

♦ A major shift in financing of education—through increased state equalization aid—is essential if local school districts are to handle

the particular educational needs of "disadvantaged" children.

The areas which presently have a concentration of the "disadvantaged" are the very areas which are currently experiencing the greatest difficulty in financing schools through local property tax resources. Since low-cost housing is one of the primary factors leading to a concentration of the "disadvantaged" there is not a sufficient base of ratables to sustain a good school program without levying property tax rates which far exceed those in nearby suburban areas. Thus, ever-spiraling tax rates in these urban centers and rural areas discourage the very redevelopment and renewal that would improve housing conditions and halt the concentration of "disadvantaged" families.

♦ In addition to providing a regular, quality school program, school systems should develop additional special approaches to assist the "disadvantaged."

These programs should seek to remedy educational shortcomings (such as poor reading or speaking ability), to find and correct physiological or emotional troubles (such as a vision defect or a frustration problem), to develop cooperation in the home, and to motivate the child to want to learn and succeed. Special attention and help for the "disadvantaged" should be available at every level of the school program, from pre-kindergarten to post-high school.

♦ School systems which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children should have teachers and special teams trained to work with "disadvantaged" children and other pupils having learning difficulties.

Such teams should include psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, reading specialists, and medical personnel. Helping teachers, freed from regular class assignments, should be able to give individual counseling and assistance to small groups of "disadvantaged" children who have emotional and social problems or who lack specific knowledge and skills which impede their ability to learn. These special teams should be used in a variety of ways, in some cases working with the child alone, in some cases working with the teacher alone, and in other cases working with both the child and the teacher in overcoming a problem.

♦ The State should give immediate and full implementation to the provisions of Sections 18:14-112, 113 and 18:14-71.37 of the Revised Statutes by providing appropriations so that each county may have the services of a department of child study, a child study supervisor, and a child study team.

These teams should include at least one school psychologist, a school social worker, a remedial specialist, and a psychiatrist to assist local school districts in operating full programs of special school services, so that all "disadvantaged" children may have such assistance. Al-

though child study supervisors were authorized by legislation in 1954, appropriations have permitted only 15 counties to have such service. Since passage of a 1959 law authorizing county child study teams, appropriations have been limited to only five teams (Union, Morris, Monmouth, Burlington, and Gloucester-Salem combined).

♦ Class size in schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children should be under 20 pupils.

Little can be accomplished with "disadvantaged" children if teachers must handle them in large classes. The New Jersey Education Association has previously recommended that regular classes be limited to 25 pupils. Where classes include a large percentage of "disadvantaged" children—who require considerable personal attention, remedial instruction, and cultural enrichment —class size must be even lower.

♦ Efforts to eliminate de facto school segregation must be tied to special school programs for helping "disadvantaged" children.

The transfer of pupils from one school to another cannot by itself make up for failure to improve the school program and to meet quality standards of education. Nor, on the other hand, can special school programs themselves avoid the responsibility as specified by the New Jersey Commissioner of Education for alleviating de facto segregation situations where reasonable means exist to prevent them. It is especially important that improvements in the school program accompany any changes so that there are adequate facilities, adequate

staffing, and adequate preparation of teachers to handle the varied educational, emotional, and cultural problems of all children in all schools.

• School systems which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children should experiment with public pre-school programs to develop language skill and provide cultural experiences for children below the kindergarten age.

The pre-school years appear to be crucial for the development of experiences needed for later academic success. Problems of personal identification, self-worth, social adaptability, creative activity, abstract reasoning, and cultural readiness should be treated at an early age. By receiving experiences in school which the regular pre-school child finds in his home and neighborhood, the young "disadvantaged" child can enter school with an enriched mental and cultural background closer to that of his age-mates.

• Schools should identify the weaknesses and abilities of every student and have a full range of programs designed to capitalize upon abilities and to eliminate weaknesses.

Corrective and remedial education should begin in the first grade and be continued in every higher grade. A child who cannot read in 12th grade could not read in first. Teachers at every level must detect potential difficulty and be prepared to remedy it. Teachers must be thoroughly familiar with specialized services available and receive assistance from specialists whenever they themselves cannot provide a remedy to a learning problem.

♦ Schools should have special enrichment programs to broaden the cultural experiences of "disadvantaged" children.

Both through school activities and through encouraged participation in out-of-school activities, the "disadvantaged" child should be exposed to widely acclaimed achievements in art, music, drama, dance, literature, poetry, and other examples of creative expression.

♦ Schools should provide a continuous program of vocational orientation and guidance.

One reason "disadvantaged" children fail to succeed in school is their lack of motivation and their inability to see that education is the tool by which they can earn a decent living and rise to a better place in society. Too often, school is another world to them; they see no relationship between education and their present way of life. It is especially important that they be shown examples of people of their own race, economic level, or cultural background who have succeeded.

♦ School systems should give a thorough reexamination to opportunities offered for vocational training and revise or add such programs as are necessary to give every child job skills appropriate to the demands of a modern technological society.

The State Report on Vocational Education and the newly expanded Federal Vocational Educational Aid Program should be examined and implemented wherever appropriate in New Jersey.

♦ **High schools should experiment more fully with work-study programs.**

Such plans would encourage more "disadvantaged" children to work part of the day to gain job experience and to attend school for enough periods to finish their secondary education.

♦ **Government and school officials should review the limitation of New Jersey child labor laws on school-sponsored work-study programs.**

Where necessary, changes should be recommended and appropriate legislation enacted to assure the success of such plans.

♦ **The State of New Jersey must expand college and other post-high school opportunities to the point where advanced education and training are available for every qualified high school graduate who applies for admission.**

College opportunities must be available for students from low-income homes. Both state and county colleges must study their policies on tuition, fees, living expenses, scholarships, and loans so that all worthy high school graduates in the state can receive further education. Expansion plans for publicly supported colleges should be drafted and implemented, not only on the basis of those who presently indicate their intention of pursuing higher education, but also in terms of those who are qualified and should be encouraged to improve themselves. In addition to four-year State college and university programs and two-year county college programs, public technical institutes should be widely available where post-high school students can continue

training for jobs requiring special occupational skills. The knowledge that such post-high school opportunities exist would in itself encourage more "disadvantaged" youngsters to apply themselves to learning and to finish their regular high school programs.

♦ Special materials and textbooks appropriate for use with "disadvantaged" children should be investigated and developed by teachers.

Since most school textbooks and teaching aids reflect the values of the middle class (the suburban home; the well-dressed father; the clean, shiny car; all-white playmates), schools should have available certain special materials to use with "disadvantaged" children or, at least, improvise materials of their own. Naturally, considerable exposure of the "disadvantaged" will continue to include "middle-class" values; for these reflect many of the standards toward which the teacher wishes the child to aspire. However, complete avoidance of situations which depict surroundings with which the "disadvantaged" may be most familiar can hinder their ability to grasp ideas, can lead to feelings of self-deprecation, and can accentuate their sense of isolation. Recognition by the school of the realities in which the "disadvantaged" live is an important factor in gaining their acceptance of education as a positive force in their way of life.

♦ Schools should be especially cautious in the use of standardized tests with "disadvantaged" children.

Aptitude tests, for example, produce relevant results only if the child has had the chance to learn the kind of things covered by the tests, has developed a reasonable verbal facility, and has been motivated to score as high as possible. Scores and comparisons to national norms based on standardized tests may not always lead

to valid assumptions about the "disadvantaged." Such tests should not be used as an excuse for limiting the educational opportunities open to the "disadvantaged." A low aptitude score may place a "disadvantaged" child in a program designed for "slow learners" when what he really needs is more challenge, not less.

♦ Schools in areas which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children should have an active community cooperation program.

Teachers, social workers, and community action specialists should be available to meet with parents in their homes and to conduct parent education classes in the school. For the attitudes toward education of "disadvantaged" children to change, the attitudes of parents must also be changed. It is necessary to increase the respect of the family and the neighborhood for education. It is necessary to upgrade the ability of parents to help their children develop basic learning skills. Schools should provide complete programs of adult education, so that parents may continue their schooling, qualify for higher academic standing, and develop attitudes, job skills, and cultural interests which will improve the family's way of living.

♦ Schools should welcome the help of non-professional aides, volunteers, and other community service organizations and agencies.

Assistants can relieve teachers of many non-teaching duties, freeing the professionals to concentrate on developing appropriate learning and cultural experiences in the schools. In addition, individual volunteers and community organizations can provide valuable experiences such as enrichment, recreation, and study programs for "disadvantaged" children. Such programs can

include in-school assistance, after-school programs, and summer projects both in the neighborhood and away from home. Schools should study how they may best coordinate and utilize these outside efforts. Their willingness to assist must be recognized and channeled into paths that prove most productive.

• Teachers and their professional associations should become familiar and involved in the efforts of other agencies and organizations which are working for improvements in the way of life of the "disadvantaged" child.

The problems of the "disadvantaged" are not those of the schools alone. Urban renewal, neighborhood rehabilitation, expanded employment opportunities, improved housing, area planning, and many other efforts can help to change the environmental factors which affect the "disadvantaged" child. Such efforts will make the educational task of the teacher much less difficult. They deserve the study, cooperation, and participation of teachers and their organizations.

• The new Federal Economic Opportunities Act should be used to its utmost in New Jersey to improve the educational and cultural opportunities available to "disadvantaged" families.

Since many of the activities in the act are educational in nature, professional educators should involve themselves as much as possible in their development and operation. Educators should be cooperating with the establishment of "Job Corps" conservation camps and training centers, "Work Training Programs" for school dropouts, "Work Study Programs" for college students from low-income families, "Adult Basic Education Programs" for instructing those over 18 who are unable to read and write English, education and day care as-

sistance for migrant children, and the "Volunteers for Service to America" corps. Educators should be especially involved in the development of Community Action Programs, which can provide special remedial and other noncurricular educational assistance for low-income individuals and families. Where no other agency is readily available to sponsor a Community Action Program, local teacher associations should act as recipients for federal grants and as leaders for implementing authorized out-of-school educational and cultural activities for the "disadvantaged."

♦ Local school systems, the State Department of Education, New Jersey colleges and universities, various professional education associations, as well as other interested agencies, organizations, and foundations should encourage research and special study projects on the problems of educating "disadvantaged" children.

At present, teachers generally know only that "disadvantaged" children miss important background and enrichment experiences and that they generally learn less readily than their age-mates. It is necessary to define and analyze more of the factors in why this is so, what specifically is lacking, and how these omissions in the child's experiences can be overcome.

Recommendations for the recruitment and preparation of teachers for the "disadvantaged"

Schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children often appear least able to recruit and to hold teachers for their professional staffs.

The type of teaching required for the "disadvantaged" —the degree of individual attention demanded, the variety of teaching approaches that must be employed, the improvement in personal and family counseling, the natural reaction to cultural, economic, and social standards quite different from that to which the teacher is accustomed, the continual need to supply motivation and incentive—all of these are emotionally and physically demanding. Teachers of the "disadvantaged" need recognition, understanding, and assistance. Without these, even the most dedicated are likely to forego the service they can perform for the "disadvantaged" in favor of easier, more attractive positions in communities not especially troubled by economic poverty, cultural deprivation, and social discrimination. As long as society and even their own colleagues—fail to recognize

the value of their contribution to the special needs of the "disadvantaged," it is unlikely that schools in which the "disadvantaged" are concentrated are ever to hold a staff of top-quality teachers.

• The teaching profession must dedicate its efforts to changing attitudes among its own members and among the public so that the best teachers are encouraged and enabled to teach in schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.

No single effort will provide a solution. A concentrated approach from many directions is in order.

• School systems which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children must provide above average compensation to all their teachers to make it economically advantageous for them to be recruited and to remain in those districts.

Compensation not only includes an attractive salary schedule, full adjustment, and fringe benefits but also an adequate basis of professional negotiations through which future improvements can be determined and by which individual grievances may be adequately appealed. The pressures, frustrations, and tensions of teaching "disadvantaged" children are demanding enough; the school system's personnel policies should reflect the most generous level of compensation and the most effective means for managing personnel matters.

• New Jersey colleges which prepare teachers should develop special programs for the iden-

tification and training of teachers who will succeed with "disadvantaged" children.

These colleges should try to identify the background knowledge and skills which such teachers need. In addition to regular requirements in the principles of psychology, learning, teaching, and curriculum development, the preparation of such teachers should include advanced courses in human relations, sociology, and psychology. Such teachers should be well trained in child study and counseling, in the teaching of reading, and in corrective and remedial techniques.

♦ Exposure to "disadvantaged" children and the environmental factors which affect their lives is especially important in the preparation of such teachers.

The teacher of the "disadvantaged" generally will face a value system and a way of living quite different from his own. As long as this remains something foreign and removed from his realm of experience, he will have difficulty developing the kind of understanding and empathy necessary for successful teaching of such children. During his preparation, therefore, he should become thoroughly familiar with neighborhoods where the "disadvantaged" live. He should find opportunities where he can talk with both children and adults who live in such areas. He should gain experience with such youngsters by volunteering for work in community action, recreation, enrichment, and study programs. He should seek summer employment in camps, day-care center, or some other position where he will have contact with "disadvantaged" children or their families. From this exposure, the teacher will come to expect

the "disadvantaged" child to be different, to be subject to different motives and stimulations, and to possess different interests and abilities. In this way, the teacher will be able to capitalize on the individual's background and experiences; he will understand the difference in values and viewpoints which may exist; he will be able to build these into a better way of life for the child.

♦ Teachers being specially trained for the "disadvantaged" should gain student teaching experience in schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.

School systems with such concentrations should be especially cooperative in facilitating arrangements by which prospective teachers can do observation and student teaching. Such opportunities should also be available to experienced teachers already in service so they can do observation and gain some experience while preparing to shift to an assignment for teaching the "disadvantaged." While some New Jersey colleges are to be commended on their experimentation with such plans, to date the number of potential teachers involved has been far short of the recruitment needs of school systems which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children. Such programs should be greatly expanded.

♦ Where they do not presently exist, on-campus laboratory schools, which include a cross-sectional student body, including "disadvantaged" children, should be established at each of New Jersey's six State Colleges and at the State University's Graduate School of Education.

Constant demonstration, experimentation, and laboratory experience—including the problems presented by

the assimilation of "disadvantaged" children—should be an important part of each future teacher's preparation.

♦ In addition, the State should make it possible for each of the six State Colleges and the State University's Graduate School of Education to establish an off-campus laboratory school in a nearby area which has a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.

Such an off-campus center should be established in cooperation with the appropriate school district with the costs underwritten by the State. Each should be a center for experimentation and research into the particular problems presented by "disadvantaged" children. Each should serve as a model of effective teaching and as a center for in-service education for the remainder of the school system in which it is located, for nearby schools, for the college involved, and other nearby colleges preparing teachers. Such centers might be established in Newark, Jersey City, Elizabeth, Paterson, New Brunswick or Perth Amboy, Trenton, Camden, and the rural farm areas of Cumberland, Salem, or Gloucester counties.

♦ School districts which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children should have special programs to recruit teachers who have special preparation and potential for effectively teaching the "disadvantaged" and to prepare them for the particular conditions which they will meet.

Such districts should have a practical and realistic orientation program, as well as continuing in-service training to acquaint new teachers with the nature of

their pupils, the home life from which they come, and the neighborhoods in which they live.

♦ No person should be permitted to teach who does not fully qualify for a regular limited or permanent certificate for the position to be filled, especially if that position is in a school which has a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.

Until such time as all substandard certificates can be discontinued, the NJEA Teacher Education and Professional Standards Committee should investigate the possibility of having the State require a school district, when it requests a waiver to employ an emergency certificated person, to prove that the person will not be assigned to a school which has a concentration of "disadvantaged" children. The learning problems of the "disadvantaged" are difficult enough without exposing them to a teacher who has not yet fully mastered the principles and techniques of regular classroom management and instruction.

♦ Because of the additional knowledge required for successful understanding and teaching of "disadvantaged" children, a program leading to a master's degree should be offered which is specially designed for teachers in schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.

New Jersey colleges which prepare teachers should develop a flexible fifth-year program for this purpose. It should permit the teacher who has included the

recommended preparation for teaching the "disadvantaged" in his undergraduate program to add additional electives which will enrich his general educational background, additional specialized courses in his subject-matter or grade-level field, and some advanced analysis of the particular problems relative to teaching "disadvantaged" children. Teachers who have not been able to include the recommended special preparation for teaching the "disadvantaged" should be able to arrange to complete this preparation as part of an internship and fifth year of study.

♦ New teachers who have been specially prepared to teach "disadvantaged" children should be assigned to schools in teams.

For both student teaching and for initial teaching assignments, valuable reinforcement can be gained if groups of new teachers can readily share their reactions and experiences with one another. The shock presented by the differences in culture between teachers and "disadvantaged" pupils can be alleviated if there is a continual interchange and discussion within a team of new teachers. Supervisors and principals can work more effectively to provide group analysis of individual and common problems. The security of numbers is important and the contagious spirit of working together can prove particularly helpful in aiding new teachers to succeed with the "disadvantaged."

♦ **Special selection methods should apply to the assignment of principals for schools which have a concentration of "disadvantaged" children.**

The principal is the most important person in assisting teachers to apply themselves to the problems of the "disadvantaged." His support and guidance is essential as the teacher introduces new methods of instruction and varies from established curriculum guides and prescribed courses of study to meet the particular needs of "disadvantaged" children. The principal is the prime coordinator in the deployment of special services personnel, in the involvement of non-school agencies and volunteers, and the establishment of effective community cooperation programs. He must be the leader in understanding the particular neighborhoods and families which the school serves and in assuring appropriate understanding and responses on the part of the school faculty. He establishes the atmosphere through which teachers can work effectively. He produces the frank, cooperative team attitude which will bring a coordinated approach to individual problems. He encourages teachers to ask for help freely; proves this to be a sign of strength, not weakness; and sees that any necessary materials or assistance are expeditiously provided. He must have adequate professional and clerical assistance so that he is free from routine tasks of school management and operation to concentrate on the particular activities of faculty and community coordination. His selection must be governed by special considerations of his experience, preparation, and ability for work with the "disadvantaged."

Conclusions

To bring about the kind of educational program for the "disadvantaged" as has here been presented, the NJEA Delegate Assembly affirmed:

That this report represents the general direction for Association policy in meeting the problems of "disadvantaged" children and the particular problem of recruiting and preparing an adequate supply of teachers for those areas in which they are concentrated.

That this report be published for the benefit of the membership of the New Jersey Education Association and the general public of New Jersey as a guideline to professional thinking on this problem.

That the special NJEA Committee on the Disadvantaged be continued for another year:

- to encourage discussion and understanding of this report by our members;
- to meet with other NJEA committees, representatives of colleges, groups and agencies, as well as non-educational groups and agencies, to encourage implementation of the suggestions made in this report;
- to act as an information clearing house on available federal, state, and foundation financial assistance;
- and to study additional implications which the problems of teaching the "disadvantaged" present in New Jersey.

The Disadvantaged Child

A selective bibliography
prepared by the staff of the NJEA Research Library

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NJEA committee studied the problems, made proposals

"The Disadvantaged Child: A Program for Action" is the initial report of a committee authorized by New Jersey teachers, in April, 1964, through the Delegate Assembly of the New Jersey Education Association.

The NJEA Special Committee on the Disadvantaged was charged with studying ways of improving the education of disadvantaged children in New Jersey with special emphasis on the recruitment and preparation of teachers for schools in areas where there are large concentrations of disadvantaged youth.

Leon Singer, a teacher at Thomas Jefferson School No. 1 in Passaic, is committee chairman.

The committee members are: Mrs. Thomy Joyner, helping teacher in Newark; Mrs. Mary Moore, special education teacher at Roosevelt Intermediate School in New Brunswick; Warren Cambridge, teacher at Camden H.S.; Eric Errickson, principal of Woodstown H.S.; and Louis R. Salinardo, teacher at Hamilton Jr. H.S. in Elizabeth.

Consultants to the committee were: Dr. Deborah Wolfe, education chief for the Education and Labor Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives; Dr. Harry Barnard, associate professor of education at Rutgers University; John Ramos, director of student teaching, and Jacques Loeliger, assistant director of student teaching, at Newark State College. Seventy persons actively engaged in special projects for assisting disadvantaged children met with the committee at an invitational conference on September 26, 1964. Their experiences and comments helped greatly in developing these recommendations.

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